



DAWN BUCKINGHAM
STATE SENATOR

May 3, 2017

Statement from Senator Dawn Buckingham on "Campus Free Speech Act"

Approved by the Senate Higher Education Committee

"College campuses in Texas must remain open to expressive activities, including those that some may disagree with. That is why I filed Senate Bill 1151, which will require each public institution of higher education in our state to adopt a free speech policy for its students and employees. While the First Amendment to the United States Constitution protects free speech, the reality is that the rights of some college students are currently being infringed upon. With the Campus Free Speech Act now headed to the Senate floor, I am optimistic that Texas can continue to lead the nation by setting an example of how states can protect free speech on their college campuses."

Senator Dawn Buckingham, Senate District 24

The committee substitute to Senate Bill 1151 approved by the Senate Committee on Higher Education requires each institution of higher education in Texas to adopt a free speech policy. This bill will restrict an institution of higher education or any employee of the institution from punishing a student or employee in any manner for engaging in expressive activities.

Highlights of the free speech policy each institution will adopt include:

- The free speech policy applies to both employees and students and must be distributed to both.
- The free speech policy includes a grievance procedure for addressing complaints of a violation of the policy.
- The free speech policy must be approved by a majority vote of the institution's governing board and posted on institution's website.
- The free speech policy prohibits a student's grade from being reduced for engaging in expressive activities, and prohibits a student's grade from being increased for engaging in expressive activities unless a variety of expressive activities and viewpoints qualify for the increase.

To read the text of the Campus Free Speech Act (the committee substitute to Senate Bill 1151), [click here](#).

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